

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



FISCAL NOTE

HB 2709 - SB 2692

February 17, 2012

SUMMARY OF BILL: Authorizes a registered voter who has either registered to vote in person or who has voted in an election since registering to vote by mail, to vote by absentee ballot. Authorizes registered voters who are full-time residents of a licensed nursing home or similar licensed institute outside of their home county to apply for the permanent absentee voting register. Removes the ability of elderly voters and voters with disabilities, whose polling place is inaccessible, to vote at the election commission office on election day. Removes the authority of the election commission to send a subsequent set of supplies to an absentee voter if the voter does not receive the first set of supplies.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Expenditures - \$1,118,400/FY15-16/Presidential Preference Primary

Increase Local Expenditures – \$2,236,800/FY12-13*
\$1,118,400/FY13-14*
\$2,236,800/FY14-15*

Assumptions:

- Currently, registered voters are authorized to vote by absentee ballot under specific circumstances, such as, absence from the county on Election Day, observance of a religious holiday, or serving as an election official.
- Under the proposed legislation, any registered voter will be allowed to register to vote by absentee ballot.
- According to a survey conducted by the Coordinator of Elections, counties examined the cost to print additional absentee ballots resulting from an increase in the number of requests and the additional cost of mailing the absentee ballots to the voters. The process of mailing absentee ballots to the voters costs between \$0.88 and \$1.33.
- In addition, some counties anticipate the need to hire additional staff during the election period due to the increase in workload due to additional ballot requests and an additional cost for their absentee counting boards.
- Costs varied based on the size of the county, the number of registered voters, and the specific needs of each county.
- Based on the results of the survey of counties, the statewide cost per election will be \$1,118,401.

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- In FY12-13 and FY14-15, there will be an increase in local expenditures of \$2,236,802 statewide due to the August and November general elections (\$1,118,401 x 2 elections).
- In FY13-14, there will be an increase in local expenditures of \$1,118,401 statewide due to the May Primary.
- In FY15-16, there will be an increase in state expenditures of \$1,118,401 statewide due to the Presidential Preference Primary.

**Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lucian D. Geise".

Lucian D. Geise, Executive Director

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